

Special Announcements

400 University Avenue • Toronto, Canada • 965-6841

July, 1972

OF HUMAN RIGHTS CODE

The tenth anniversary of the proclamation of the Ontario Human Rights Code fell on June 15. The Premier of Ontario, the Honourable William G. Davis, described it in the Ontario Legislature as a "significant milestone in the history of Ontario's legislative action in the field of human rights."

Reviewing the legislation which had its beginning in 1944, and which was codified in 1962, Premier Davis said the date of proclamation of the Code was chosen to coincide with Magna Carta Day. He added that the idea for this belonged to the late Alex A. MacLeod, who was the moving spirit in the early years of the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Noting that equal opportunity is the cornerstone of the Code, the Premier said that the largest number of complaints received by the Commission are in the area of employment.

He stated that the Government of Ontario "intends to remain in the vanguard of human rights legislation." Premier Davis declared that racial disharmony will not be allowed to take root and that minorities will be protected against discrimination "so that they may make their full contribution to a flourishing community".

The Premier urged all Ontario residents to foster the ideal of the brotherhood of man.

SEX, MARITAL STATUS AND AGE ADDED TO CODE

The Minister of Labour, the Honourable Fern Guindon, last month was given legislative approval for substantial amendments which broaden the coverage and effectiveness of the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The bases of discrimination, hitherto limited to race, creed, colour, nationality, ancestry or place of origin, have been enlarged by the addition of sex, marital status, and age. Housing provisions now cover "any housing accommodation" except where the owner or his family occupy part of the premises and renting tenants share a bathroom or kitchen with them.

The employment provisions of the Code have been extended through the incorporation of the Women's Equal Employment Opportunity Act, previously administered by the Women's Bureau. The legislation regarding age discrimination in employment has been transferred to the Code from the Age Discrimination Act, which was repealed. Self-governing professions are now mentioned specifically, just as trade unions have been mentioned in the previous text.

Besides employment, the other areas covered by the Code have been widened to include discriminatory acts on additional bases. Public accommodation and signs and notices are covered as to discrimination on the basis of sex and marital status and housing is covered regarding discrimination on the basis of sex. There are new provisions for the promotion of special employment opportunity programs for disadvantaged groups, where necessary.

The maximum fines for non-compliance by individuals is increased from \$500 to \$1000 and for corporations from \$1000 to \$5000.

The procedure for lodging a complaint has been expanded. Besides the victim of the alleged discriminatory act, another person may lodge the complaint and the Commission itself may initiate a complaint.

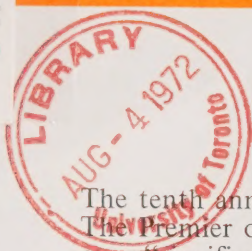
An appeal procedure to the Supreme Court of Ontario has been provided from a Report of a Board of Inquiry.

An important organizational change resulting from the new legislation is the changed status of the Women's Bureau, which is now a division of the Commission.

The revised Code has a number of other ramifications. The new definition in the housing provisions gives relief to that section of the population which cannot afford an apartment in an apartment building or similar self-contained living quarters.

Maternity leave, which was covered by the Women's Equal Employment Opportunity Act, is now part of the Employment Standards Act in recognition that it is a necessary labour standard. Maternity leave will continue to be administered by the Women's Bureau.

3 1761 11653077 5



The inclusion of sex and marital status in the Code will ultimately eliminate existing differentials in fringe benefits such as life insurance and pension, sickness and accident plans. To avoid dislocation, the enactment of this provision will be deferred to allow employers time to adjust their benefit programs and to permit the Minister of Labour to review the practical problems which may arise.

With regard to sex discrimination and housing, exceptions are made to permit the continuance of such institutions as university residences, correctional institutions and hostels. The incorporation of the Women's Equal Employment Opportunity Act into the Code means that classified, help-wanted columns in newspapers can no longer contain a reference to sex.

All amendments, like the Code itself, apply to the Ontario Government as well as to the private sector.

COMMISSION HOLDS PUBLIC MEETING OUTSIDE TORONTO

The April 27 meeting of the Commissioners in Thunder Bay was the first time that such an event had taken place outside Toronto. It was also the first time part of a Commission meeting was held in public.

Commission Chairman Dr. Daniel G. Hill told the meeting that a new departure was made with the appointment of two prominent citizens, Miss Valerie Kasurak and Mr. Walter Currie, as Commissioners. Dr. Hill also stated that the public meetings, planned for various parts of the province, are intended to make the Commission better known and more accessible to community feedback.

Among the community groups present at the Thunder Bay meeting were representatives of cultural minority groups, churches, educational institutions and voluntary associations.

Subjects discussed included the policing policy practised by the Ontario Provincial Police in northern Ontario towns, relations between police and the native peoples, housing problems of Indian families in the transition stage from reserve life to integration into urban society, and more equitable representation for Indian commercial fishermen. The question of prior consultation with native peoples affected by proposed construction projects which would change the ecology of an area and the life-style of the Indian inhabitants was also discussed.

Also present at the meeting were Commissioners Dr. Lita-Rose Betcherman, former Director of the Women's Bureau and Mr. Gordon Greenaway, of the Conciliation and Mediation Services office of the Ministry of Labour.

COMMISSION DIRECTOR ATTENDS U. N. SESSION IN NEW YORK

Commission Director Robert W. McPhee was the Ontario Representative in the Canadian Delegation to the United Nations Economic and Social Council meeting held at the end of May in New York City.

THREE BOARDS OF INQUIRY ANNOUNCED

Three Boards of Inquiry have been appointed under Section 14 (a) of the Ontario Human Rights Code by the Minister of Labour, the Honourable Fern Guindon, to conduct hearings into complaints of alleged violations of the legislation.

A Board has been called in Windsor to hear the complaint of Mr. Maurice Williams against Mr. Martin Ouellette that the latter denied him employment because of his race and colour. Chairman of the Board of Inquiry is Professor Horace Krever, Faculty of Law, University of Western Ontario.

Two Boards of Inquiry will hear cases in Sudbury. Mr. Leroy Matthew, a black West Indian, alleges housing discrimination by Seven City Developments Limited. Mrs. Ramona Younge, a black woman, alleges that she was denied the rental of an apartment because of her race and colour by Mr. Ted Abraham. Board Chairman for both cases is Walter S. Tarnopolsky, Vice-President, York University.

C.A.S.H.R.A. HOLDS FOUNDING CONFERENCE IN EDMONTON

Three representatives from the Ontario Human Rights Commission were present at the founding conference of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies, held in Edmonton in May.

The Chairman, Dr. Hill, was accompanied by Commission Director Robert W. McPhee and Assistant Director George A. Brown to the meeting which adopted the following guidelines:

- a) to provide opportunity for an annual meeting of policy-making and administrative officials of statutory human rights agencies and
- b) to act as a vehicle through which the exchange of information of value to member agencies can take place and to assist in planning and fostering co-operative services.

NOTE TO READERS

In the interest of economy, and to assure your uninterrupted receipt of this publication, you are urged to inform the Commission of a change of address as soon as it is known.